

# SAN FRANCISCO ART ASSOCIATION BULLETIN

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*Indians of the Andes (water color)*

By ANTONIO SOTOMAYOR

From One Man Water Color Show, S. F. Museum of Art.

## Sanity in Art

By TIMOTHY M. WULFF

ART is always sane. There is no other kind. Art eludes definition even as life or love or truth and yet, like them, it cannot be denied.

A crude analogy is to say that art in a painting or carving is like gold in a matrix and "gold is where you find it."

Art is no respecter of person, place, or thing. Art may be found incised in common clay on the walls of a filthy cavern, or chased on the rim of a silver chalice. Art may dwell in the hut of an African native, vital, elusive and precious, yet scorn a ducal palace. Art may occur in the most obscure abstraction, or it may be the redeeming factor in a statue or painting that is a

spittin' image of an otherwise repulsive creature. Art is incorruptible. It is one of the words of the Covenant and cannot be broken or even touched by attack. The schools and the castes and the categories do not exist for art. It cannot be bought, commanded, cajoled, or classified. Art answers only the invocation of genius, and genius is unpredictable.

These lines express, albeit in awkward form, the common knowledge of those who labor hard, with brush or chisel, to bring about the marriage of power to delicacy, that beauty might be born.

Perhaps this should go into the current pub-

(Concluded on Page 3, Column 2)



## Responsibilities of an Art School

By FREDERICK OLMSTED

AS METROPOLITAN areas grow into points of greater activity than that in rural, so in cities themselves arise even smaller and more concentrated centers of control and intellectual effort. As a main office is the brain of a transcontinental railroad or a thousand stores, so is a university or an important school in a more tenuous fashion the nerve center of training and technique for great areas of land and a million people. If such an institution by location, size, reputation, or influence of its matured students has any pretensions to excellence or even superiority, it thus cannot help

assuming a position of tremendous responsibility, and sooner or later must in its special character recognize this responsibility or fail in its duty to society.

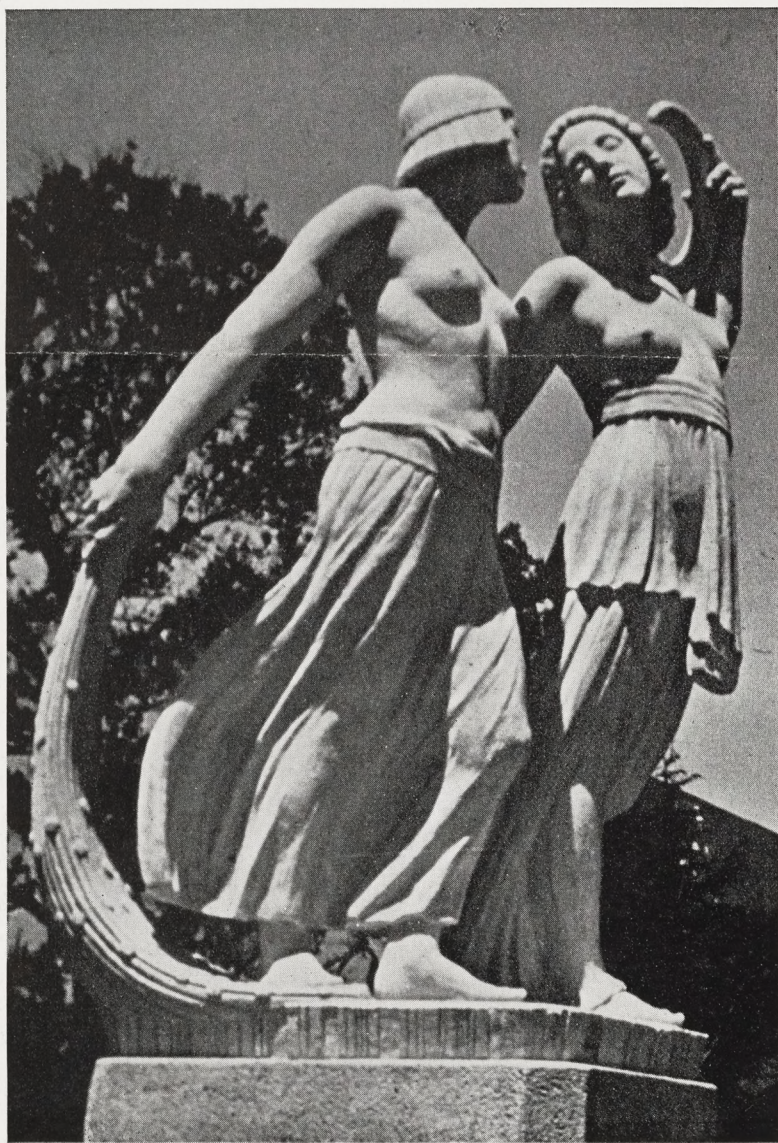
An art school surrounded by large universities is in the extremely fortunate position of being able to disregard conventional academic pattern, and should be in the superlative position of constantly drawing upon the most highly qualified youthful material from these surrounding colleges in addition to that attracted from the region and city. It would be difficult to find a more perfect situation for education and research in art.

However, a specialized position is no excuse for any sort of monastic isolation from the rude commercial world, or from awareness of energy and experiment in other educational centers. The fact that a school exists and has an inflow of young hopefuls decidedly indicates that there is a direct need for experience that will equip the student to enter society by his skill in some kind of art, and absolutely indicates that the school is responsible for the confidence placed in it by the student.

But one cannot assume omnipotence and say "Let there be an art school" (and there was an art school), because that has been tried in other times and places, and there wasn't any to speak of. One cannot collect a lot of money and a lot of expensive teachers and produce Cezannes. Fine schools have run on financial pittances in miserable barns, and magnificently endowed institu-

*Moon and Dawn*

By ETTORE CADORIN  
Golden Gate International  
Exposition



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tions in marble mausoleums have been some of the worst. Ely Faure said, "Art cannot exist in a vacuum," though that is somewhat the apparent tendency today. A school in a field which has a growing and vigorous modern tradition working sometimes with and sometimes against a vast and older one must be allowed to undergo a careful evolutionary formation, but must at all times be particularly sensitive to the growth of society, to progress in education, and to the ever widening field of art.

However, a theoretically correct approach cannot evolve a successful school without a certain internal vigorousness and enthusiasm. Competition among teachers, an eager quest for innovations and improvements in methods and personnel, and an alert scouting by school and educational graduates for talented student material should be examples of normal procedure in an art school as they are in any university.

Today we are interested in the production of teachers, commercial designers, and artists, and though the first two must be thoroughly competent artists, we are forced to consider different training, in the advanced period for each. A good teacher not only has the knack of bringing out correctly directed effort in his pupils, but also must have a miscellaneous sort of academic accumulation to circumvent arbitrary legal requirements. The commercial worker has a tremendous knowledge of industrial methods, qualities of materials, and peculiarities of the business world—many things quite useless to the plain artist, who, poor soul, too often after leaving school pines away from neglect, emotional wandering, or simply malnutrition. But above all the teacher and industrial designer must be the best of artists. A fine football coach may be too old and fat to do a vicious knee block and make it look legal, but from former practice he can easily impart such ability to the team. The nominal and perhaps even cheap quality of present commercial art may be blamed on manufacturers' and advertisers' taste, but a good artist with a bond salesman's technique could certainly improve the situation.

Under expert management a good modern gallery like the San Francisco Museum maintains effective relationship with surrounding cities and territory, and is important and instructive to artists and public as a concentration show point of the best work anywhere available. Architecture and design, hand and machine craft, and experiment and research are given important consideration. Sensitivity to society and intellectual effort in the field of *exhibit* can hardly be better maintained.

There is no conceivable reason why the California School of Fine Arts should not be allowed to reach a parallel appropriateness, with the two becoming an incomparable combination. There exist now some deficiencies. It seems unusual to have no primary study of the nature of color, or little approach to such similar basic problems as control of mediums or training in craftsmanship. It is strange to have neither an intimate relationship with architecture and its students, nor even an acquaintance with the many processes of contemporary production. It might even be thought inconsiderate to leave pupils unfamiliar with practical experience or a hint of the personal questions they will face in society.

The responsibilities and evolution of a school present intricate difficulties. They are not, however, unsurmountable.



## Sanity in Art

*(Continued from Page 1)*

lic record because we have just witnessed the embarrassing spectacle of one who professes to be an artist expose in news print his limited esthetic sense by a ridiculous proposal to regiment that which is an unregimentable spirit.

Alas, it is not impossible that some readers, through lack of familiarity with the niceties of the artist's craft, might be misled by his ponderous rehashing of ancient platitudes and threadbare cliches, to the extent of taking his words for gospel, and thereby lose opportunities for much esthetic enjoyment.

To such readers I should like to say: Be of good cheer, for the house of art has many mansions wherein you may wander at will and find, perhaps in the most unlikely nook or cranny, that which will enrich your lives forever.

Moreover, gentle readers, whenever you behold some notoriety seeker tearing his shirt and yelling for a return of sanity to art, you may be certain he is a brother in folly to one who might campaign for the reestablishment of wetness in water, heat in fire, or let us say affection in love.



A well attended gathering and buffet supper was held in the cafeteria and lawns of the California School of Fine Arts on Sunday afternoon, October 1st. About 135 artist members and friends comprised the group that met to chat and play games, as guests of the Artists' Council. Although sponsored by the Council, the success of this pleasant undertaking was due to Mrs. Harriet Whedon, who had charge of the affair.



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The BULLETIN is indebted to Mr. Daniel Mendelowitz of Stanford University, Department of Graphic Arts, for the following contribution. The catalogue of the Pacific Cultures, Golden Gate International Exposition, is outstanding in content and presentation. The entire series of Art Catalogues is worth possessing.

### « Catalogue Review

By DANIEL M. MENDELOWITZ

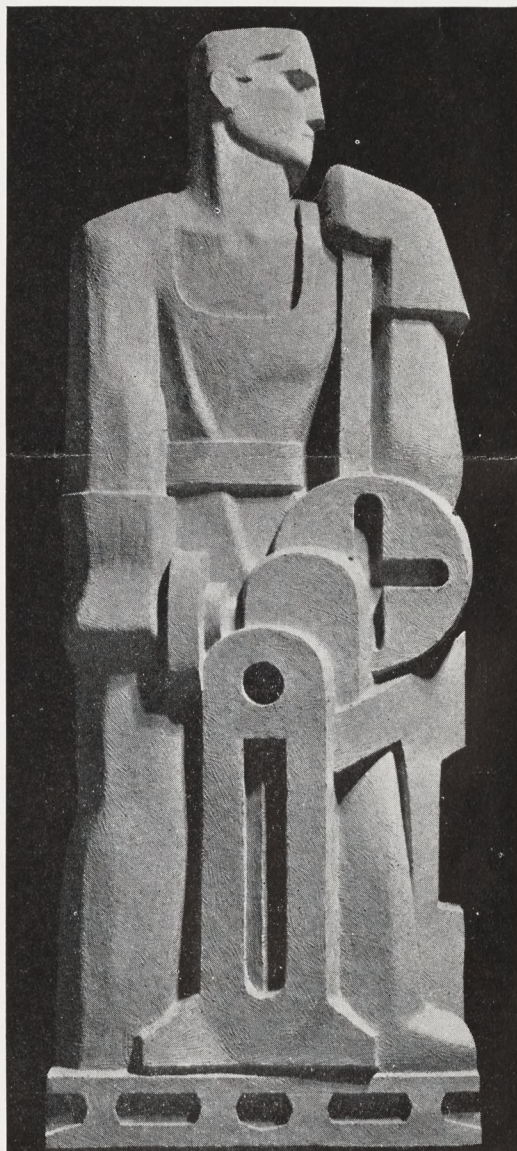
THE CATALOGUE for the Exhibition of the Arts of the Pacific Cultures is distinguished by the careful selectivity that has gone into its making. A comparatively small number of excellent and characteristic pieces have been reproduced to represent each of the seven major cultures that are native to the Pacific basin. This makes it possible to get a clear and fairly comprehensive picture of the arts and crafts of this vast area in a one hundred and fifty-five page book.

The already familiar arts of China, Indo China, Siam and Japan are well represented. An excellent short essay in the catalogue clarifies the chronology of the main periods in Chinese Art. The material on the not so well known indigenous cultures of the Northwest Coast of America, the Pacific Islands, South America, Mexico, and Central America is particularly interesting for a number of reasons. It has the exotic charm of the unfamiliar and yet represents a genuine and little recognized element in the cultural tradition of this area. The ceremonial sculptures, potteries and bas reliefs have a powerful and expressive quality that has been, and will continue to be, stimulating to all modern artists. And the handicrafts suggest a multitude of decorative motifs, materials, and techniques for modern designers and craftsmen.

It is satisfying to realize that after centuries of neglect recognition is finally being given to the cultural achievements of the conquered races: the Eskimos, Aztecs, Mayans, Incas, Hawaiians, Polynesians, and a host of others. It seems particularly important today. The humble tools and household utensils of these

primitive peoples can teach industrial America much by way of reverence for simple materials and a delight in ingenuity and craftsmanship. Of particular interest are the fine potteries, carvings, and textiles from Central and South America, with their astonishing flashes of humor and their delightful use both of simple bold forms and elaborate decorative arabesques.

Each series of illustrations is accompanied by sufficient text to give a slight picture of the culture which produced the arts and to place it chronologically and geographically.



Relief

By FREDERICK OLMSTED  
South-West entrance, California Bldg., Golden Gate  
International Exposition



## The Arts of Peace

By LANGDON WARNER

The following is re-printed from the Art Page of the Sunday Chronicle, October 1st.

*A recent article on this page discussing the possibility of establishing a permanent center for the Pacific arts in San Francisco and the importance of the study of the arts in time of war called forth the following contributions from the director of the Pacific Cultures section in the Fine Arts Palace at the Fair.—A. F.*

**S**TUFFED and nauseated by radios and headlines from Europe, Americans are now in a mood either to stick their fingers in their ears or to devote themselves to poring conscientiously over maps and the utterances of foreign statesmen. To stop one's ears from the unpleasant stuff seems cowardice, and is. To become engrossed in the rapid passing of European events would seem, at first sight, the least tribute one can pay to the nations who shoulder the burdens we do not assume but which, combatant or neutral, must soon be ours.

Now that we are agreed not to fight, the first and last problem is to make sure that all this extraordinary stimulus to thought and action shall be put to the most gainful use.

Obviously the fullest values that can be got out of our new energy are to be found in the arts of peace. Happily, these are not merely vague aims on which we fall back for lack of more noble and immediate ambitions. They are demonstrably more desirable, more permanent and much harder to attain than the arts of war. They require better discipline than the goose-step, greater moral courage than advance under fire, deeper intellectual effort than military strategy. To pursue such things needs the whole man—body, intellect, soul, spirit. To pursue the art of war needs but part of the man. In war the commander and the private reluctantly lay down every tool and every accomplishment they have laboriously mastered in pursuing undoubted goods. They pick up the single doubtful weapon by which they hope to shorten the period of its employment. They pick up the rifle in order to resume, as soon as may be, the complete life of a human being.

What then are these arts of peace which are said to be more necessary, more difficult to excel in, more gainful and more permanent than the art of war? Obviously, now that we have chosen neutrality, the first duty is to make sure that we get the sort we have bargained for — a successful one. Next, this fresh access of energy can be put to solving the problems of democracy which immediately confront us. To-

day's local paper suggests Migrant Labor, Thirty Dollars on Thursdays, waterfront disputes, freedom of speech and conservation of natural resources. Why, more energy, wisdom and tolerance are needed to settle these five problems than to plan and execute a full-sized European victory, and the results are permanent.

While local difficulties are being solved, back of them all and challenging our keenest minds remain responsibilities neglected while we indulge in the emotional stimulus of the radio war news.

If, for instance, we agree that the education of the next generation must train them rather toward wisdom than toward the accumulation of facts, let us concentrate on that great art of peace in which we have proved ourselves none too proficient. The result will be a generation capable of tough thinking, able to make distinctions between right and wrong, truth and falsehood. Who knows whether a true comprehension of democracy may not be the result in America when we practice this sort of education? It might win or, better still, avert a war.

Behind the half-dozen accomplishments and reforms which we must undertake before this war heat cools, there remain, beautiful and necessary, the common arts of peace so easy to belittle, so precious for the thinking man. All the powers of a complete man are called forth to practice them and because of them the Nation is united.

Making shoes, seining fish, planting and reaping, writing sonnets and detective stories, gathering news, driving motor cars, changing diapers, cooking, loving, booing the umpire; these are among the arts of peace we propose to carry on with pride and delight, eagerly and enthusiastically in the American manner.



### Recognition

From Emanuel M. Benson, Consultant, Federal Art Project, WPA, Walker-Johnson Bldg., Washington, D. C., came the following:

"May we have your permission to reprint a portion of a letter on 'Mosaic as a Modern Expression,' by Helen Bruton, which first appeared in your BULLETIN? We would like to include this article in the forthcoming Project publication, 'Art For The Millions.'"



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## Current Exhibitions

*California Palace of the Legion of Honor*, Lincoln Memorial Park: October 1 through November 5, Watercolors by Richard Allman and Edward Johanson; October 1-31, Children's Chalk Drawings; continuing through October 8, Watercolors by Robert Bach and Daniel Romano; continuing throughout October, Painting and Sculpture by San Francisco Artists.

*City of Paris Gallery*, corner Geary and Stockton Streets: Seventeenth Century Engravings from a private collection.

*De Young Memorial Museum*, Golden Gate Park: Continuing through October, Frontiers of American Art (National Exhibition).

*Gump Galleries*, 246 Post Street: October 2-14, Faculty Show: Millard Sheets, Richard Stevens, Hamilton Wolf, Glenn Wessels, George Post, Carl Beetz, William Turner, Fred Barker, Ernst Stolz; October 16 to November 4, Exhibit of The California Society of Etchers.

*Mills College*, Oakland: The History of Printing, An Exhibition in Honor of the Gutenberg Anniversary, to October 20; Exhibition of Abstract Art, October 22 to November 29.

*Oakland Art Gallery*, Municipal Auditorium, Oakland: October 8 to November 5, Seventh Annual Exhibition of Watercolors, Pastels, Drawings and Prints.

*Paul Elder Gallery*, 239 Post Street: Continuing through October 7, Oils and Drawings by Justin Murray; October 9 to 28, Watercolors by J. Halley Cox.

*San Francisco Museum of Art*, War Memorial, Civic Center: Through October 8, Scenes of San Francisco; through October 10, Watercolors by Antonio Sotomayor; through October 15, Watercolors by Carl Rabus; Photographs by Ansel Adams; Children's Art,

## Members Gallery

The San Francisco Art Association Gallery at the San Francisco Museum of Art will show the following:

Through October 8, Watercolors by James Budd Dixon; October 9 through October 22, Oils by Bertha Walker Glass; October 23 through November 5, Oils by Ruth Armer.



The history of Art Lecture Course at the California School of Fine Arts has just begun. It is given by Mrs. Jane Berlandina Howard on Tuesday afternoons from four to five o'clock, and although especially designed for students of the school, is open to the general public.



The San Francisco Art Association Exhibition of Drawings and Prints at the San Francisco Museum of Art will open on Tuesday evening, October 17th, with a preview to members and friends.



from Classes of Mme. Galka Scheyer; October 10 through November 5, Paintings by Frank Van Sloun; October 16 through November 1, Paintings by Paul Klee; October 18 through November 19, San Francisco Art Association Annual Exhibition of Drawings and Prints; October 23 through November 13, Sculpture in Limited Editions.